

SUPER -N- SITE
Ken Shepherd, Prairie Bluff Golf Course

Reynold Jacobson -N-

For some unknown reason, Lemont, Illinois, is home to a long line of golf course superintendents. They have either grown up in Lemont or worked on Lemont golf courses at some time during their careers. Included in this long line is Reynold Jacobson, also known as, "Ren," "Renny," "Jake," and sometimes "Snake." Not to be misconstrued as derogatory, the nickname "Snake" is a term of endearment to some of his closest superintendent friends.

Renny grew up in Lemont and attended Lemont High School. At age 16, he went to work for Keith Fuchs at Gleneagles where he worked until he was 21. Renny spent the next three years laying bricks but then returned to the golf industry. He made the decision and crossed Archer Avenue to work for Kenny Lapp at Cog Hill for three years. Renny then made it to the show by taking the superintendent position at Inwood Golf Course within the Joliet Park District. He worked there for a short time before being transferred over to Wedgewood Golf Course, where he worked until 1989.

It was during his seven years with the park District that Renny and I became good friends. Because the Joliet Park District owned three golf courses, you were always working with two other superintendents. As Renny would say, "We've been down a lot of dirt roads together." During our years at Joliet we were involved in hiring Steve Crow to manage Inwood golf course. While Renny was at Wedgewood, he and Steve spent a lot of time together refereeing high school basketball games. Steve did a great job during his short stint at Inwood before leaving for Briar Ridge Country Club in Schererville, Indiana. In February of 1992, we found out that Steve had leukemia. By that June, he had passed away. While we were at the park district the three of us came to be known as "The Three Amigos." I could share a lot more stories, but that



would take up a lot of print. One story that Renny was always fond of telling both to Steve and to other people was how Steve got hired. Renny would explain that when we reduced the field down to the final two; we flipped a coin; and Steve won.

In 1989 Renny left Wedgewood and went to Carillon in Plainfield where he was involved in the construction of 18 holes. Years later nine more holes were built. Renny spent 13 years at Carillon. While there he was also responsible for the snowplowing of a couple of housing developments that were adjacent to his golf course, a job he said he does not miss to this day. The spring of 2002 arrived, and Renny went to work for the McEnerys at Green Garden Country Club in Frankfort. When Renny arrived at Green Garden, he was greeted with construction that already had begun on nine more holes. That would bring the total of golf holes up to 45. Since coming to Green Garden in 2002, Renny has worked hard to give the McEnerys what they need in order to provide their customers with a quality golf experience. It's a relationship that has been very good for Renny and the McEnerys both.

Renny and his wife Debbie live down the road in Manhattan, Illinois. Debbie works at the Midwest Golf House as Manager of Administration for Illinois Junior Golf. His daughter Melissa is a third grade teacher near Princeton, Illinois. Ren's three sisters still live in the Lemont area. I would be remiss if I did not



(L to R) Renny, Matt Hook and Ruben Jacobo.

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mention his extended golf family, longtime assistant, Matt Hook, and equipment tech, Ruben Jacobo, have been with Renny since their days at Carillon.

As we look back and remember some of the tough seasons that we all have endured, I think what will stick out more in my mind will be the great friendships that were established. I like to

remember all the stories that can be told. Having Renny as a friend, there are a lot of stories that could be told! Come to think of it Ren, one story I swore I would never tell anyone was how we hired you back at Joliet in '82. When it came time to make a final decision on hiring you, we flipped a coin, and you won! I'm glad you did buddy. **-OC**



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